

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

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RFP NO.:
12PSX0431

Proposal Due Date:
5 March 2013

Date Addendum Issued:
27 February 2013

PLEASE NOTE:

This document has been marked as “Returnable”. Electronic submittal of this document indicates that your company has read and accepted any modifications to the RFP that are contained in this Addendum.

RFP ADDENDUM #1

DESCRIPTION: **Addendum #1 - Responses to Submitted RFP Questions**

FOR: **Cisco Products for All Using State Agencies, Political Sub-Divisions of the State (Towns and Municipalities), Schools, and Not-For-Profit Organizations**

PROPOSERS NOTE:

Question 1:

Document 12PSX0431_IT_Contract_RFP has several grey areas that have not been filled in with values for durations, percentages, etc. specific to this RFP. Would you be able to provide an updated document with the values required inserted?

Response: The values will be entered when the State starts negotiating with the highest scored vendor and those values have been determined.

Question 2:

Would the State accept a bid from a vendor that is not a Gold Certified Cisco Channel Partner for the above mention RFP.

Response: The specifications for this RFP are clearly stated under the Product and/or Service Specification Section (page 4).

Question 3:

Is there a service charge or other fee that BizNet will charge the awardee of this RFP? If so, please define.?

Response: No, there are no service charges or other fees to the awarded vendor from this RFP.

Question 4:

In ATTACHMENT II, Price Schedule, item 11, the State request a discount for “Servers Switches”. Could you please provide further definition of this category?

Response: In ATTACHMENT II, Price Schedule, item 11, should read “Switches”, only.

Question 5:

In the RFP response template, Section 1.5 Alternative VAR Support, the requirement in part reads: “The VAR shall provide documentation by Cisco that an alternate VAR, acceptable to the State, will be available to the State under the pricing and terms of this contract in the event that the chosen contractor ceases support or is otherwise unavailable to provide support. The VAR shall obtain from Cisco a signed guarantee to this effect and include it with the proposal...” If Cisco is unable or unwilling to guarantee that an alternative VAR will be available under the pricing terms and conditions of this contract, and no bidder is therefore able to submit such a guarantee, how would this circumstance impact bid evaluations?

Response: No impact.

Question 6:

In the RFP response template, Section 1.6 References, the State is requesting that references for State of Connecticut government entities not be submitted. Wouldn't such references be of particular value in the evaluation process as these references would address the performance of the account team that would potentially be providing products and services on the new State of Connecticut contract as well?

Response: The State of Ct. is specifically looking for other references other than the ST of Ct.

Question 7:

In the RFP response template, Section 1.1 states that consideration will be given to VARs utilizing small, minority and/or women's business enterprises as subcontractors. Does this requirement apply specifically to the use of minority vendors specifically certified as such in the State of Connecticut or for minority vendors regardless of state of certification (that would be used under this contract)? The main reason for this request for clarification is that there are very few (if any) CT certified minority vendors that are also Cisco certified VARs or Cisco certified engineer.

Response: Yes, this requirement specifically applies to the use of small/minority vendors that are certified by the State of Connecticut Set-A-Side Program.

Question 8:

In the RFP response template, Section 7 it states that: "All maintenance plans shall include hardware, software and labor". There are maintenance plans available that include labor and those that do not. Typically, the State purchases maintenance plans that do not include labor and utilize their own IT personnel for labor (for a variety of practical reasons). Typically maintenance plans that include labor are significantly more expensive and state entities should have the option of choosing maintenance plans either with or without labor at their discretion. Making it mandatory that labor be included in ALL maintenance plans is not economically in the best interest of the state.

Response: Please include all your maintenance options with or without labor but then explain the exceptions

Question 9:

Is the state considering awarding this contract to more than one company?

Response: See Section VIII Contract Award under Proposal Requirements

The State reserves the right to award this Contract in a manner deemed to be in the best interest of the State and may include, but not be limited to:

- A. by item, group of items, or in its entirety
- B. geographic location to adequately service the entire State of Connecticut in the best possible manner.
- C. Multiple Vendor Award

Question 10:

In the Price Schedule – Hourly rate for Time and Materials Service – Does services refer to Maintenance services, installation and setup services, or some other services?

Response: The nature of the Time and Material service item allows us to assign whatever work, maintenance, installation or setup, that the State deems necessary to the TM engineer.

Question 11:

SECTION: Product and/or Service Specifications:

The State is requesting Cisco to indemnify the performance of the partner. This is not a typical posture that Cisco usually takes, is there another type of indemnity option that would satisfy the State?

Response: No, historically, Cisco has provided this in the past to the State of CT.

Question 12:

SECTION: Proposal Requirements

IV. Emergency Standby for Goods and/or Services: The 2 hour HW response time suggests a 2 hours HW replacement contract SLA. Is this correct or is the State willing to accept HW replacement SLA at 4 hours or NBD?

Response: Yes, this is correct.

Question 13:

SECTION: Proposal Requirements

IX Stability of Proposed Prices: What is the term of the price quotes. "one (1)" is mentioned without a unit of time. Should vendors assume 1 month or 1 year?

Response: 1 year

Question 14:

Parts and support and Technical Staff - Support is not specified. This this maintenance support, or installation and setup support? Will the support be on-site, remote support, or a combination?

Response: All of the above.

Question 15:

Training - Is the state looking for a formal education proposal? How many people or groups would need training?

Response: N/A.

Question 16:

From how many different groups will requests for products and services come from?

Response: A contract from this RFP would be open to all State Agencies, Political Sub-Divisions of the State (Towns and Municipalities), Schools, and Not-For-Profit Organizations.

Question 17:

SECTION: Proposal Requirements

IV. Emergency Standby for Goods and/or Services: The 2 hour HW response time suggests a 2 hours HW replacement contract SLA. Is this correct or is the State willing to accept HW replacement SLA at 4 hours or NBD?

Response: See answer #12.

Question 18:

Over the past 5 years:

How often has the State requested 2 hour response?

How often have the State requested 4 hour response?

Response: N/A, information is not available.

Question 19:

Does the State have the configuration files for all the installed equipment, and can they share this with the vendors?

Response: Yes. The information can be shared with VAR that has signed a confidentiality and non-disclosure statements with the State of CT.

Question 20:

Are the configurations stored locally, easily accessible for a technician who responds on site?

Response: Yes.

Question 21:

Are all stored configurations good, at least the last known?

Response: Yes.

Question 22:

In cases where there is a hardware failure, is restoration of the last known good configuration sufficient to satisfy the repair requirement?

Response: Yes.

Question 23:

How does the State manage a failure where the item is not under warranty (e.g. Take another item out of stock and repopulate it with components from the failed item; Order a new item)?

Response: Yes. The process described is accurate.

Question 24:

When an item fails and the State calls the vendor to replace, how is that managed on the State's end (e.g. Does the vendor contact a call center that acts as liaison to assist us throughout the process; does the State identify an individual who is responsible to the vendor for the term of the call)?

Response: Both examples apply and the State has a Network Operations Center that, handles service request.

Question 25:

What is the state of the State's current Cisco inventory regarding service contracts? Does the State have 100% under contract or some lesser number? What is that per cent?

Response: Data is not available

Question 26:

Does the State have a standard for service contracts? For instance, core routers have 7x24 with 2 hour response but edge switches are 8x5 and best effort? What are the service level agreements for each of Cisco's categories?

Response: The State uses whatever level of service is requested by the customer to dictate they type of service contract to purchase.

Question 27:

Please provide vendors the type and number of products the State has installed.

Response: The State is looking for this proposal to cover the entire Cisco catalog.

Question 28:

What does the State use for network management? (i.e. MARS, Solar Winds, etc.)?

Response: Netcool, CiscoWorks, Whatsup up gold, solar winds etc..

Question 29:

Does the State use multiple network management products depending on the department, product or some other criteria? Please identify the specifics?

Response: See answer to question 28

Question 30:

SECTION: Proposal Requirements

IV. Emergency Standby for Goods and/or Services: The 2 hour HW response time suggests a 2 hours HW replacement contract SLA. Is this correct or is the State willing to accept HW replacement SLA at 4 hours or NBD?

Response: See answer #12.

Question 31:

Will the vendor have direct access to the State's network management software to help the vendor troubleshoot or will the vendor be assigned a person in the network management team to help?

Response: The State will assign a technician to work with the VAR, or it can be shared with VAR that has signed confidentiality and non-disclosure statements with the State of CT.

Question 32:

What helpdesk or similar software does the State use for managing issues?

Response: N/A

Question 33:

Can the State provide a few examples of issues managed through the helpdesk software?

Response: N/A

Question 34:

The bid states that VAR must deliver product within 15 days of receiving PO. It is quite common for Cisco to have lead times of over 15 days. In order to meet this 15-day requirement, VAR may need to stock products for State of CT.

- 34 a. Is the State of CT willing and able to provide VAR with a forecast of needed product ahead of time (for example, 30 days), so that VAR may stock these products in advance of PO?
- 34 b. If "no" to (a) above, can State of CT provide VAR with historical purchase information (products and quantities over the last 6-12 months), so that VAR may choose to stock products for quick turn-around of orders?

Response: N/A

Question 35:

Does the State of CT purchase Cisco Smartnet maintenance with any of its Cisco purchases? If no, why not?

Response: Yes.

Question 36:

On page 4 of the bid document, it states: The VAR shall guarantee that the maintenance plans provided will be of equal coverage as those in the Cisco Systems Product Catalog and Global Price List. All maintenance plans shall include hardware, software, and labor. Is the State referring to Cisco Smartnet maintenance? If no, to what is it referencing?

Response: Yes

Question 37:

The bid references a 90-day product warranty and also that the State will not pay for labor charges for warranty support. We are reading this to mean that during the 90-day warranty, VAR is expected to repair/replace product at no charge for parts, labor or travel. Is this correct?

Response: Yes

Question 38:

The bid references "T&M Services (No maintenance contract)". Would this be for support on items that are no longer under warranty or under maintenance contract? If so, is the State able to provide a list of this installed base of products that would fall under T&M? If this cannot be provided, how should VAR determine how many devices are in the environment and of what models, so that parts can be stocked appropriately?

Response: If a part is not available in the open market we would not expect the T&M Engineer to produce the part to fix an issue.

Question 39:

In cases where there is a hardware failure, is restoration of the last known good configuration sufficient to satisfy the repair requirement?

Response: Yes

Question 40:

How many of the purchases done annually are done via P-Card?

Response: 2012 - 150 transactions totaling \$34,489.84

Question 41:

Will vendors have a chance to present their response?

Response: Everything must be submitted electronically, in accordance with the RFP.

Question 42:

Please describe Cisco training programs you have utilized and what firm provided the training.

Response: The State uses "off the shelf" Cisco Training courses provided by number of vendors.

Question 43:

The current contract has blanks in it. When will BEST fill these in?

Response: The values will be entered when the State starts negotiating with the highest scored vendor and those values have been determined.

Question 44:

Is the contract negotiable for certain terms?

Response: Yes.

Question 45:

How much partner implementation services did you historically use? Specifically by type (base engineer, CCIE, etc)

Response: Little, the State typically looks for CCIE caliber engineers.

Question 46:

What is the historical volume of break-fix service calls against the contract?

Response: Data Not available

Question 47:

What proportion/quantity of the break-fix calls were classified as emergency calls requiring an immediate response?

Response: Data Not available

Question 48:

Will the State provide the weighting for each category listed in the Selection Criteria section of the RFP?

Response: No

Question 49:

In the event that Cisco does not name an alternate VAR on behalf of the Respondent, what will the State accept as an alternate solution for this requirement?

Response: The St of CT will not accept an alternative solution for this requirement.

Question 50:

Can the State define what constitutes a routine trouble call. Please define what constitutes an emergency trouble call?

Response: No trouble calls are routine. An emergency trouble call will be defined by the end user during that condition.

Question 51:

Can the State define what “no maintenance contract” means to the State. Our assumption is that you are defining this as anything outside of a Cisco SMARTnet contract, but would like clarification.

Response: No maintenance contract means no maintenance contract whether it’s SMARTNET or third party.

Question 52:

Can the State confirm if the State is looking for a premise-based, cloud-based or hybrid-based Cisco solution. Would you like to learn more about these solutions??

Response: N/A

Question 53:

Please define what the State considers an emergency service call vs. a routine service call.

Response: See response to question 50.

Question 54:

If the equipment qualifies for Cisco’s trade-up program in this instance, is the State interested in learning more about this?

Response: The St of Ct is interested in any free learning opportunities.

Question 55:

The State lists Physical Security as a product category on the price sheet, please define what products would be eligible for the Security category for this RFP?

Response: Any security product in Cisco’s catalog.

Question 56:

Can the State clarify what Cisco products and/or services are included in the Wireless category?

Response: Any wireless product in Cisco’s catalog.

Question 57:

Can the State clarify if the State considers the Four Hours Response – Onsite Service, to be optional? Per the language stated in the RFP document, it’s assumed this is a required service and not an option?

Response: If purchased in maintenance contract, four-hour response is not optional.

Question 58:

Can the State clarify if the State considers the Two Hours Response – Onsite Service, to be optional? Per the language stated in the RFP document, it’s assumed this is a required service and not an option?

Response: If purchased in maintenance contract, two-hour response is not optional.

Question 59:

Is the Statement of Qualifications to be included in the RFP Response? Please advise as to what section the State would like to see this documentation as it is not clearly stated in the RFP document

Response: Yes, the Statement of Qualifications is to be included in the RFP Response.

Question 60:

Can the State confirm the Warranty Period that the State expects the Contractor will provide your end users (outside of standard Cisco warranties). Also, if there are varying categories regarding Warranty periods (i.e. implementation, installation, etc.), please include those in your clarification.

Response: The State expects standard Cisco contracts.